Low-threshold, community-based strategies to scale up PrEP for Latino MSM

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EHE National Meeting 9.15.22
Study Team and Partners

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Background

Prep coverage in the U.S. by race/ethnicity, 2020

Overall: 25%
Black/African American: 9%
Hispanic/Latino: 16%
White: 66%

Ending the HIV epidemic in the U.S. 2030 target goal.
Community-based organizations (CBOs) provide culturally- and linguistically-appropriate services to targeted communities.

And are trusted by the community.

CBOs are often funded to navigate / link to PrEP.

Not typically included in designing delivery systems.
Aims

• **Aim 1**: Develop a package of collaborative, low-threshold PrEP strategies most likely to address barriers for Latino MSM.
  • Convene a Community Expert Panel that meets monthly
  • Conduct focus groups of CBO clients

• **Aim 2**: To pilot the package and prepare it for effectiveness and implementation testing.
  • Operationalize workflows for PrEP strategies
  • Pilot implementation of strategies at each partner CBO
  • Determine parameters of larger study
Implementation Science Methodologies

• **Community Expert Panel**
  - Framework: CFIR
  - Monthly meetings
  - Modified Delphi method to:
    - Delineate barriers to PrEP
    - Identify strategies
  - Use AIM, IAM, FIM to assess acceptability, appropriateness and perceived feasibility of strategies

• **Focus groups with CBO clients**
  - Framework: CFIR
  - 4-8 clients of each CBO
  - Mix of virtual and in-person
  - Rapid qualitative analysis

• **Piloting implementation**
  - Framework: Proctor
  - Ongoing
Process + Key Outcomes

Client OUTCOME
Decrease number of HIV infections among Latino MSM

Intervention OUTCOME
Increase number of clients who have access to, uptake, and sustain PrEP
Process + Key Outcomes

Client OUTCOME

Decrease number of HIV infections among Latino MSM

Intervention OUTCOME

Increase number of clients who have access to, uptake, and sustain PrEP

- CFIR-guided brainstorm and discussion on barriers to PrEP for Latino MSM
- Panelists rank barriers by relative importance
- Thematic grouping of barriers
Process + Key Outcomes

Client OUTCOME
Decrease number of HIV infections among Latino MSM

Intervention OUTCOME
Increase number of clients who have access to, uptake, and sustain PrEP

Barrier A
The health system is too complex, rigid and fragmented

Barrier B
The process takes too long / isn't worth it

Barrier C
Clients do not feel included or empowered

Barrier D
Concerns about PrEP medications
Process + Key Outcomes

- **Client OUTCOME**
  - Decrease number of HIV infections among Latino MSM

- **Intervention OUTCOME**
  - Increase number of clients who have access to, uptake, and sustain PrEP

- **Barrier A**
  - The health system is too complex, rigid and fragmented

- **Barrier B**
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- **Barrier C**
  - Clients do not feel included or empowered

- **Barrier D**
  - Concerns about PrEP medications

Additional notes:
- CFIR-guided brainstorm of strategies
- Semi-structured discussion to narrow down to more relevant strategies
- Panelists use AIM, IAM and FIM to rate strategies on **acceptability**, **appropriateness** and perceived **feasibility**
- Thematic grouping of strategies
Process + Key Outcomes

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Intervention OUTCOME

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Barriers:

Barrier A
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Barrier C
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Barrier D
Concerns about PrEP medications

Approaches:

Approach #1
Improve communication between health center and CBO staff

Approach #2
Implement low-barrier access strategies that meet clients’ preferences

Approach #3
Develop/conduct locally-appropriate outreach materials
Process + Key Outcomes

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Develop/conduct locally-appropriate outreach materials

CBO client focus groups
• Not one size fits all
• Flexibility is key
• Clients trust CBOs
Process + Key Outcomes

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**Intervention OUTCOME**

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**“CBO-PrEP Package”**

- Web-based referral tool
- Implementation coaching/support
- Telemedicine option
- Local lab testing option
- PrEP Media Kit
Implementation challenges

• **Related to PrEP strategies**
  • Competing priorities and more urgent needs
  • 3 different CBOs, 3 different styles/cultures
  • Large academic health center not nimble

• **Related to academic-community partnerships**
  • Many administrative and bureaucratic layers (funding timeline, IRB) that can dampen morale
  • Discrepancy between research expectations of CBOs and their capacity/priorities
Addressing challenges

• Dialing strategies up/down: meeting the moment
• Prioritizing approaches have broad appeal – but also maintaining flexibility
• Bringing issues back to the Expert Panel: regular solicitation of feedback
• Nurturing a space to discuss administration, implementation, engagement and more
Lessons learned

• Health systems/centers and CBOs can collaborate to deliver PrEP care that increases empowerment, reduces barriers, and provides flexible options for Latino MSM.

• Promising strategies for implementing this care include those that:
  • Reduce inter-institutional communication barriers
  • Promote tailored messaging about PrEP and about the process of obtaining it
Lessons learned

• Effective collaboration between health centers/systems and CBOs can benefit from:
  • Flexibility (at multiple levels)
  • Identifying champions on each side of partnership
  • Investing time and sustained engagement

• Use your ABCs!
  • Acknowledge and allow varying perspectives
  • Buy-in
  • Culturally responsive
Acknowledgements

- Collaborators: Destination Tomorrow, Latino Commission on AIDS / OASIS, Montefiore Prevention Program, Voces Latinas
- Supporters: Einstein-Rockefeller-CUNY CFAR, Montefiore Division of General Internal Medicine, MACC+ Hub
- P30 AI124414, K23 MH114752, HRSA H80CS00626, CDC 1NU62PS924753